



# Autumn has arrived!

**In this edition we welcome new members of staff. We also have lots of exciting, upcoming events so please add the dates to your diaries. We would love to see you all there!**

**Enjoy reading, and we look forward to seeing you soon.**

**Team Brigstowe x**



# What's on this Autumn..



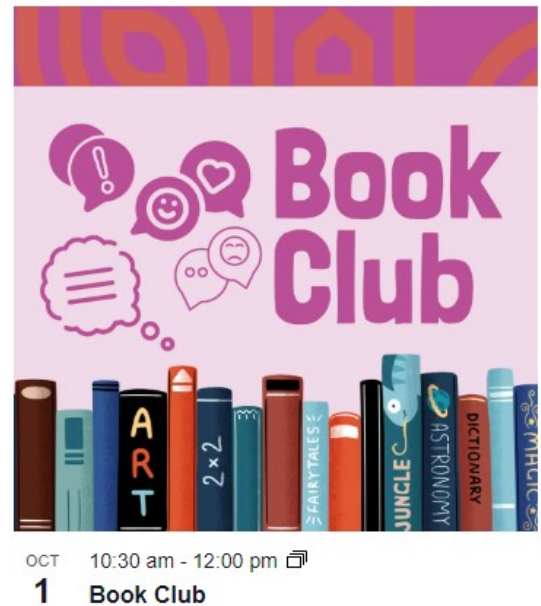
## Tuesday, 1st October

**Book club** - 1st Tuesday of the month at Easton Community Centre

For more information call/text

Abiir on 07539 309326 or email:

[abiir@upourstreet.org.uk](mailto:abiir@upourstreet.org.uk)



## 23rd November

### Trans Pride South West Community Day!

The Station, Silver Street, BS1 2AG

<https://www.transpridebristol.org.uk/events/trans-pride-bristol-community-day>





## **Bristol City Council's Consultation**

Brigstowe has been notified by the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team at Bristol City Council (BCC) that they are proposing to completely defund HIV Advice and Support Services in Bristol.

Thank you very much to everybody who attended the in-person consultation and took part in the online consultation. We had a great turn out at the in-person consultation and we were overwhelmed with the level of support that we received.

We are doing everything that we can to fight these cuts to ensure that we can continue to provide our local HIV services.

We will keep you updated on any developments. In the meantime, if you have any questions about these potential cuts please call the office on **0117 955 5038**.



**We have some new additions to Common Ambition Bristol (CAB). CAB works with African and Caribbean heritage communities in Bristol to reduce HIV diagnosis, stigma and generally improve sexual health. Please join me in welcoming Tidrah, Zakiyah and Augustina to the team!**



# TIDRAH

## CAB 'Community Engagement Facilitator'



## Tidrah: CAB 'Community Engagement Facilitator'

I am the new 'Community Engagement Facilitator' at Common Ambition Bristol. I'll be working alongside our volunteer Community Connectors to **do** outreach and have a CAB presence at community events, raising awareness about sexual health, HIV, and where people can get tested. I will also be part of the welcome team at Common Ambition Bristol's community clinics at Charlotte Keel and Montpelier Health Centre.

My work has always involved creating communities from creating safe spaces for young people to engage in conversations about mental health to coordinating teams of student Peer Mentors. I'm passionate about exploring and reducing health inequality, especially in areas that carry a lot of stigma such as emotional wellbeing and now, sexual health. I've followed the work of Common Ambition for a long time so I'm excited to now be working in the team. I really believe in the power of communities to build safe and comfortable spaces for each other and love how rooted Common Ambition Bristol is in working in community with people of African and Caribbean heritage.

**Common  
Ambition  
Bristol**  
Improving sexual health

**ZAKIYAH**



**CAB 'Health  
Promotion and  
Sexual Health  
Workshop Facilitator'**

## **Zakiyah: CAB 'Health Promotion and Sexual Health Workshop Facilitator'**

I am a freelance Sexual Health Workshop facilitator for CAB. I am organising information sessions, community workshops and a movie night to spread the word about CAB's work.

I am a writer and cultural practitioner. I write often about British and Caribbean natural history. I've recently completed a PhD focused on Black British Journalism. I regularly run writing and Caribbean storytelling workshops for people from all walks of life - from primary school children to a group of Polish women aged 50 and over in Hull who speak very little English.

I wanted to be part of CAB as I know a lot of the stereotypes and stigmas around sexual health in my community. I know some of the hangups and I believe I know how to talk to African-Caribbean people about the issues. I wanted to be a part of CAB to work in my community and work for my community. I also want to get so clued up on good sexual health practices that I never put myself at risk again.



# AUGUSTINA

## CAB 'Health Promotion and Sexual Health Workshop Facilitator'



## **Augustina: CAB 'Health Promotion and Sexual Health Workshop Facilitator'**

My role involves increasing HIV awareness, promoting testing, and reducing stigma within African and Caribbean heritage communities in Bristol through organising workshops and events that provide sexual health services and support to encourage people, especially younger generations, to know their HIV status and access services like PrEP and U=U.

Before joining CAB, I was involved in several initiatives focusing on social issues within the black community in Bristol. I co-founded the Ghanaians at UWE society and hosted Afrohall, a radio show on Hub Radio that discussed topics like knife crime and promoted black creatives. I also co-founded The Bedmate, an initiative aimed at addressing sexual and mental problems among black youth. My work with the African Voices Forum (AVF) and my role in Digital Engagement further strengthened my connection to Bristol's black community through organising events.

I wanted to join CAB because I am passionate about improving sexual health awareness within the black community and addressing the stigma around HIV. CAB's mission aligns with my dedication to creating safe spaces where people can access vital information and support, especially around sexual health. Being part of an initiative that prioritises health and well-being for underrepresented groups is something I'm truly committed to.



We are sad to say goodbye (and secretly hoping it's au revoir) to one of our wonderful and long serving volunteers – Andy.



Andy has been volunteering for Brigstowe for 7 years in every way he can and in every role, he gave huge energy, commitment, and hard work.

A peer mentor in the community and at the Brecon Clinic, member of the campaigns team, fundraiser, positive speaking at World AIDS Day events and during HIV awareness training, Andy has immeasurably impacted and has been an invaluable support to the Peer Mentor team, the HIV community and to Brigstowe.

You've have been integral to Brigstowe for so long Andy, and you will be sorely missed by everyone at Brigstowe, staff, volunteers and clients alike.

Thank you does not seem a grand enough gesture but is all we can say, and we are excited to see your future journey.



THANK YOU!

# HIV & the Menopause

To celebrate World Menopause Day on 18th October we have provided information on the Menopause & HIV.

## What is the menopause?

Menopause is the time when menstruation periods permanently stop. It is a natural part of the ageing process and usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55.



## Menopause & HIV

The menopause and HIV is under-researched, but the evidence base is growing. Some studies suggest that women living with HIV might experience symptoms of menopause earlier and more severely. According to the [PRIME study](#)\*, symptoms of menopause among women living with HIV in England were sometimes confused with HIV symptoms.

\* <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/6/e025497>

## Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) & HIV treatment

HRT can be prescribed to reduce some symptoms of menopause, prevent osteoporosis, or treat early onset of menopause. It involves taking oestrogen in the form of tablets, an implant or a gel to replace the decline in your own levels. HRT can be taken with HIV treatment; however, HIV clinics don't usually provide HRT so you'll need to have it prescribed by your GP. There are also other therapies available to treat menopause symptoms,

**\*Sources:** information taken from [THT](#) and [NAM aidsmap](#).

## Our commitment to the menopause & EDI

Brigstowe is committed to creating an inclusive society and workplace. We believe that the menopause should not be taboo or hidden, although no staff member or volunteer should feel obliged to disclose information about the menopause. Instead, we feel it is important for everyone to understand what the menopause is and to be able to talk about it without embarrassment, and for the person it is affecting to know they will be listened to, understood and supported.

# Emergency opt-out testing for BRI and Southmead

From October 2024, Bristol will be introducing opt-out testing for HIV and other Blood Borne Viruses in the two Emergency Departments at BRI and Southmead Hospital. This is great news as it will reduce the number of late diagnoses and help us to connect with people who have disengaged with their treatment. As a result, we hope to support more people living with HIV in Bristol.





## Upcoming 'All In session...

**Come along to meet new people in a relaxed and fun environment, form friendships, share experiences and come 'All-In' together!**

### **Eating Well with HIV**

**Brigstowe, The Old Co-Op, 42 Chelsea Road, Bristol, BS5 6AF**

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 11am – 1pm**

Want to know more about eating healthy? How to maintain a good diet whilst living with HIV? Come to this 1 hour session delivered by a specialist Dietician from Southmead Hospital. After the session there will be a shared lunch.

This event is free of charge & fully wheelchair accessible. **Please call 0117 955 5038 to reserve your place.**

# HIV Awareness Training

Brigstowe's HIV Awareness Training empowers professionals with the skills and knowledge they need to work confidently with people living with, affected by or at risk of HIV.

## Sessions will:

- Clarify the definitions and differences between HIV & AIDS.
- Explain HIV prevention and transmission.
- Provide up-to-date information on treatment.
- Explore stigma and prejudice.
- Outline testing services.
- Inform participants of support available.
- Promote best practice when working with a person living or affected by HIV.

"Such clear, concise & informative training"

(training participant)

All sessions will include a guest speaker living with HIV who will share their experience in order to help trainees better understand what it is like to live with HIV. Resources and ribbons are also provided for participants to take away.

**For more information on costs, how to book & anything else please get in touch.**

Brigstowe has been providing support for people living with HIV in the Bristol & surrounding areas since 1996.

**brigstowe**<sup>+</sup>  
Local HIV Services



For more information scan



Easton Community Centre  
Kilburn Street  
Bristol, BS5 6AW

0117 9555 038  
info@brigstowe.org  
www.brigstowe.org

Facebook @BrigstoweInfo  
Twitter @BrigstoweInfo  
Instagram @Brigstowe



# World AIDS Day 1st December



We have some more important dates for your diaries. Please email [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org) for more information on any of the events or call us on **0117 955 5038**.

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Nov – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec** – Billboard Campaign will go live across Bristol and Weston. During this time there will also be a U=U message on the digital screens in Bristol and South Glos bus stops.

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> Nov /2.30pm** – City Hall – Red Ribbon Flag Raising

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> Nov** – Free HIV Awareness Training session

## **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> Nov**

6pm – 6.30pm – Candle lit (electric) Remembrance Vigil

7pm – 8.30pm – World AIDS Day Celebration

\*Both of these events will be held in the Watershed





# Client Christmas Party



Wednesday 18th December

4.30pm - 6.30pm

Easton Community Centre

We invite you, your partner or significant friend and children to our annual gathering to celebrate Christmas and enjoy a social time together. There will be festive food, games for adults and children, a raffle and lots more!



This event is free of charge & fully wheelchair accessible.

Please ring Brigstowe on **0117 955 5038** to reserve your space.

# Follow Us

## Join in and follow all of the action

Want to join in with our activities and most recent updates? There are a whole load of platforms for you to engage in conversation.



[www.facebook.com/brigstoweinfo](https://www.facebook.com/brigstoweinfo)



[www.x.com/brigstoweinfo](https://www.x.com/brigstoweinfo)



[www.instagram.com/brigstowe](https://www.instagram.com/brigstowe)

